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MEXICO 12, D. F.

9th September, 1967

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker
La Fiorentina
St. Jean Cap Ferrat A.M.
France

Dear Mary,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter of August 16 and to hear that you are enjoying yourself in St. Jean Cap Ferrat. I know the neighbourhood and have always enjoyed it tremendously. To me it is one of the most beautiful spots in the world, even though if one is not in a private house it is somewhat spoilt by the many noisy tourists who fill every place.

I have read with great interest the article from Science and am at a loss to answer your question how I would deal with it. An answer would depend entirely on the question how accurate the report is. On the surface it indicates that the visit of the President at the National Health Institute was a victory for you, while his not making critical points and accepting their story was a defeat, and that the two things cancel each other out. Now the point is, of course, whether that is so or not. My hunch is that as in all such matters what really matters are not the two abstract principles, namely that both theoretical research and clinical applications are necessary, but the personality of the people who execute the program, that is to say, bureaucratic versus imaginative and concerned people. But here lies, of course, the difficulty, because while one can criticize principles it is so difficult to speak about the real point of the bureaucratic, rigid nature of a person, his lack of imagination and real concern. Of course if one could explain that to the President it would be fine, but I guess that is awfully hard to get across to a man who has spent his life to a large extent with bureaucrats.

Thank you very much for sending me Clara Malraux's biography, which I am most interested in reading. He is certainly an interesting and complex character, and I guess

through the eyes of his wife many things would be revealed. I read that he himself is also publishing an autobiography; maybe it is an attempt at an answer.

I have been reading two volumes, or rather, the first one and am just beginning the second, of a diary of Anaïs Nin. I don't know whether you have heard of her. She was a great friend of Henry Miller in Paris; she was analyzed twice, first by Dr. ~~Aron~~ *Arday* a rather orthodox Freudian and then by Otto Rank who was once Freud's 'favorite son,' and later left Freud to start his own business. He was a gifted man, and in many ways followed ideas similar to those of Jung; he was less brilliant and imaginative than Jung and at the same time also probably closer to the clinical reality of his patient. Nevertheless what he has in common with him is that he preaches endlessly about his theory. The autobiography is kind of interesting because Mrs. Nin succeeded with both analysts in the same thing: she made them fall inlove with her (quite innocently, as far as that goes) and then they both confessed how lonely and unhappy they were, and she started to kind of give them analytic support. It is also interesting that she did exactly the same thing, and not just by construction, with her father. I don't know whether you are interested in this kind of thing. These analytical reports occupy only a small part. Her dealings with Henry Miller who seems to have been a rather disgusting and crude person are more voluminous. Drop me a line if you are interested; in that case I would like to send it to you. Also let me know whether you know a biography of another very interesting woman, much more interesting than Mrs. Nin, and that is Lou Andrea Salomé. She was a woman with whom Nietzsche fell in love; she rejected him, and married a man with whom she refused during 16 years of marriage ever to have any sexual relations. In fact, she felt any kind of permanent tie as unbearable. She must have been extremely charming, intelligent and gifted; she later on became a pupil of Freud's, and was greatly admired by him, and in his shy and un-erotic way probably also loved by him. There is a biography about her which I find very interesting. Again I would appreciate if you dropped me a line saying whether you have read it, or are interested. I should like to send it to you.

I have just been reading the diaries of a very interesting German woman, the Countess Reventlov, but unfortunately the book is written in German and has not been translated. She was quite a gifted woman, very charming, but quite incapable of forming any affective relationship

with a man. She came from a rigid Prussian feudal family, rebelled against it all her life, and had a most undisciplined way of acting upon any sexual impulse that came up. In fact, sometimes ~~she~~ ~~he~~ was very poor, and would sleep with men for money, and while all this sounds kind of sordid, she was one of the most dignified and self-respecting people. Her only love was a child, whose father she broke with immediately when she became pregnant, because this should be all her own. She has this similarity with Lou Andrea Salomé: the idea of any affective bond gave her a sense of claustrophobia. A great deal of women's psychology can be learned, I think from all three biographies. The diaries of the Countess are perhaps the most interesting, but also unfortunately, not worth while learning German in order to read them.

I am enjoying my work on the first volume of my opus, which will be about the question of human destructiveness and aggressiveness. Basically an analysis of what kinds of destructiveness exist, to what extent they are socially conditioned, and to what extent they are changeable.

I have no idea how long you will stay in France, so I am sending a copy of this letter also to New York.

With all good wishes

As every yours,

Erich.

Erich Fromm